

Proficiencies and Skills That Employers Seek from Graduates



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TIIVISTELMÄ

Tämän loppututkielman tarkoitus on selvittää mitä taitoja ja muita pätevyksiä työnantajat etsivät kansainvälisistä opiskelijoista, ja mitä osaamista he vaativat heiltä.

Työn teoriaosuus käsittelee pääasiassa yritysten palkkausprosessia ja mitkä asiat vaikuttavat heidän palkkauspäätöksiinsä. Teoria perustuu pääasiassa olemassa oleviin tutkimuksiin ja artikkeleihin ja myöskin rekrytointiammattilaisten haastatteluihin.

Tutkimuksen perusteella palkkauspäätökset tehtiin pääasiassa kielitaidon perusteella, koska suomen kielen taidon puutteet saivat työnantajat välttämään kansainvälisten tutkinnon suorittaneilta opiskelijoilta. Myöskin kontaktien puute on vaikeuttanut heidän työllisyystilannettansa, ja tämä on johtanut heidän poismuuttoonsa, Suomesta joko kotimaahansa tai muualle Eurooppaan.

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Avainsanat Työllisyys, kansainvälisyys, opiskelijat, yliopistosta valmistunut

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to find skills and proficiencies that employers are seeking from international graduates, and what does the employer require from these international students to offer employment.

The theory of this thesis focused on how employers are hiring employees and the process from which a candidate is chosen for any given position. The theory is based on existing research, as well as some interviews conducted for this thesis.

Based on the research, hiring decisions were mainly made based on the language proficiency of the job applicant. Relating to their proficiency in Finnish, the lack of Finnish skills makes the employer more wary of hiring international graduates. Another major point was the lack of existing contact within the Finnish job market, as this makes employment opportunities difficult to find. The lack of employment opportunities has resulted in the emigration of foreign graduates either back to their home countries or other parts of Europe.

To improve the employment opportunities of foreign graduates, the following improvements should be made: Increasing the quality and the quantity of Finnish language education during the studies in the universities or the universities of applied sciences, to better prepare international graduates for a job. Also, an improvement in the co-operation between businesses and universities is needed, as well as encouraging internships for international students in these companies.

Keywords Employment, international, students, graduates

Pages 30 pages

CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1	Background	2
1.2	What are skills and proficiencies	2
1.2.1	Skills.....	2
1.2.2	Proficiencies	2
1.3	Foreign graduates in other European countries.....	3
1.3.1	Employers perspective on hiring in European countries	4
1.4	Go Strong project	4
1.5	Background of case companies and organisations.....	5
1.6	Research Question	5
1.7	Research Objectives	6
2	THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	6
2.1	Research methods.....	6
2.1.1	Literature.....	7
2.1.2	Interviews.....	7
2.2	Qualitative analysis	8
2.2.1	Methods used to get data for qualitative analysis.....	8
2.3	Skills and proficiencies that are needed in the future	8
2.3.1	The skill needed in the future	9
2.4	Hard skills.....	9
2.4.1	Obtaining hard skills.....	10
2.5	Soft skills	10
2.5.1	Obtaining soft skills.....	10
2.5.2	Why soft skills are crucial for the employer.....	11
2.6	Hybrid skills.....	11
2.7	Skills required in the modern workplace	12
2.8	Most crucial skills employer seeking from employees	13
2.9	How employers hire employees	13
2.10	What is recruitment	13
2.10.1	Who is responsible for the recruitment of employees?.....	14
2.11	How employers look for employees	14
2.12	Passive recruitment.....	15
2.13	Active recruitment	15
2.14	The importance of the Finnish language for international graduates.....	15
2.14.1	Increasing the language skills of foreign graduates	16
2.14.2	Increasing co-operation between the companies and Universities..	16
3	JOB ADVERTISEMENT COMPARISON	17
3.1	Criteria for what job advertisements were selected for this study.....	17
3.1.1	Field of study selected for this comparison	17
3.2	The platform where the job advertisements were picked	17
3.3	Criteria that are required from the candidates	18
3.4	Results of the comparison	19
3.5	Job advertisement comparison in other Nordic countries	20

4	THE STATE OF FOREIGN GRADUATES IN FINLAND	20
4.1	Risk in hiring non-native language speakers	20
4.1.1	Risks for employer	21
4.2	Lack of connections and lack of working experience in Finland	21
4.2.1	Importance of having connections in the job-seeking	22
4.2.2	The impact of lack of connection in international graduates	22
5	ANALYSIS.....	23
5.1	Problems facing international graduates	23
5.1.1	Fears of the employer	24
5.2	Potential in international graduates for employers	24
5.2.1	Potential from globalism.....	25
5.2.2	Effects of international students in the local economy.....	25
6	RECOMMENDATIONS.....	25
6.1	Potential of international graduates.....	26
6.2	Increasing the study and importance of the Finnish language	27
6.2.1	Steps to take to improve language training.....	28
6.3	Improve cooperation between companies and universities.....	29
7	CONCLUSION	30
	REFERENCES.....	31

1 INTRODUCTION

Over half of all international student currently studying Finland across all of the degree programs, want to stay in Finland for at least two years looking for employment corresponding with their degrees. However, their employment opportunities are not as numerous as their Finnish counterparts. (Yle 2018)

These students that are studying in Finland feel they do not get sufficient support for getting employment opportunities and are generally dissatisfied with the employment-related issues. This, as well as the problem of not having sufficient proficiency in Finnish and the lack of work experience in Finland and the lack of contacts and connection that might aid in their employment, will lead to a loss in intellectual capital to other countries. (Yle 2018)

International students that graduate from technical universities as well as universities of applied sciences have an employment rate of one-third of graduates. The main issues regarding foreign graduates are the lack of Finnish language skills, both written and spoken, as well as the lack of networks in Finland, that Finns have accumulated during their lifetimes, leading to them returning to their countries of origin or some other part of the world. Majority of these graduates have grown to like Finland, and very much would like to stay and work if they managed to overcome the language barrier and find employment opportunities. (Levander 2016)

The lack of an existing support network in Finland greatly diminishes a foreign graduates' chances of getting an employment opportunity, and due to the language barrier, the difficulties in getting an employment opportunity decrease significantly and compelling them to move abroad or returning to their country of origin. (Levander 2016)

The foreign graduates that currently are employed, there is no data if they are employed in the field that they have studied, and that may cause that some of the currently employed students might relocate to other parts of the world in search on career opportunities that correspond with their degree. One fact worth mentioning is the increased rate of employment among foreign graduates that graduate from a university of applied science, compared to a university, suggesting that the more practical study methods are more effective, as well as work placement conducted in the universities of applied sciences. (Teivanen 2014)

1.1 Background

The search for employment opportunities is a problem that every student face, regardless of the field they are studying. To be able to successfully obtain a job that matches the education and the degree the student has received, is a complicated and a difficult process, and yet it is the most important activity the student must engage in, for there is no reason to get a degree if there are no employment opportunities in that field.

Employment opportunities may not be as easily accessible for foreign graduates, as it is for native Finnish speakers. This will inevitably lead to the highly skilled labour that has been trained by Finnish standards, and are beneficial to the economy as a whole, to return to their home countries or to leave for a country that has more employment opportunities for skilled, university-educated labour. Numerous factors have to be accounted for

The author made multiple interview request to different professionals in different companies and government agencies but was unable to gather useful information or received no response. The author has therefore decided to move the focus from interviews to other publicly available sources. These sources include popular recruitment websites such as LinkedIn, from which the author will compare different job advertisements from three months.

1.2 What are skills and proficiencies

1.2.1 Skills

The author of this thesis will define “Skills” as talents needed in the workplace to be able to complete the task assigned to that individual, so that they may conduct their job in the most efficient manner possible, and will help the individual to reach their respective goals. Skills include talents and other learned attributes, such as language skills, that are crucial for employment in other countries, that speak another language than the job seeker. Skills also include a function that is required from the worker, such as computer skills, and other soft skills like leadership, problem-solving and teamwork skills. (TargetJobs 2019)

1.2.2 Proficiencies

Proficiency is used almost interchangeably used with the word “Skills”, so the author has defined the word proficiency as the ability to use the acquired skills that and individual may possess, such an individual may be

skilled in speaking Finnish, but lack as the professional working proficiency to work in a mostly Finnish speaking working environment.

1.3 Foreign graduates in other European countries

The current economic and demographic situation requires that there is a talent shortage among various fields that could be supplemented by international students. This situation not only relevant in Finland, but also other European countries, and even some people possess these talents, they are unable to secure employment. (Lee 2015)

A foreign graduate is seen as “Model immigrants” and attracting them to western countries has been rather successful, yet foreign graduate retention rate and employment are low among western countries. This has many reasons, but the main reason is the lack of language skills and the lack of social support structure, that the natives of these countries mostly have. Also, the employer is always seeking to minimise their risks and costs, and a foreign employee might require additional training that may lead to extra expenses to the employer, and they might choose for a native candidate instead. (Lee 2015)

The study, cited by the University World News, shows that as in Finland, four other European countries face these problems of employment rate among international graduates. Even though there has been a steady increase in the number of international students in European countries, the support services that the universities provide for their students, have stayed the same and no meaningful change has been implemented. (Lee 2015)

Majority of graduates, 50% to 80%, want to stay in their host countries after they have graduated, but more than 30% are still seeking for employment after a year of graduating from their universities. The study suggests that to improve the employment rates of the graduates, they require more language training and overall awareness about the job market. (Lee 2015)

Canada has been more successful in integrating its international students to the working community. Local large and small businesses are keener to hire international graduates than their European counterparts. Universities on Canada support their students by working with private institutions as well as public ones to provide more job opportunities to their students from foreign backgrounds. (Lee 2015)

1.3.1 Employers perspective on hiring in European countries

Small and mediums sized companies face a problem when recruiting new employees to their company. They lack the necessary resource to advertise or train employees, skills that would be required to work in their respective companies. In these small and medium-sized businesses, it is hard to accommodate non-native workers.

Due to the inability by the small and medium-sized companies, to provide comprehensive training programmes, hiring workers that already possess the necessary skills are vital. Even though these international graduates already possess these skills, they lack more often than not, the fluency of the native language. Also, those that can provide training programs and are looking for international graduates to work in their company have a hard time looking for them, due to the international graduate simply not being aware of the job opportunity. To correct this, —the university needs to work more closely with employers to employ their graduates. (Lee 2015)

The lack of connections is sited as the second biggest reasons for the lack of employment opportunities for international students, a majority of the jobs in small to medium-sized companies are hidden from the public and usually hire candidates that people in the company already know. Even larger companies tend to rely on an already established connection to possible candidates, even though bigger companies are often posting open job advertisements. (Lee 2015)

1.4 Go Strong project

This thesis is a part of the wider European Union project, Go Strong, which purpose the increase the employment for foreign graduates in Finland. This thesis will be from the employers' perspective and will focus on the reasons why the employment rate of foreign graduates, is relatively low compared to their Finnish counterparts.

Foreign graduates referred in this thesis will mean, university students that come from abroad to study in Finland and focus on how employers feel about these international students as an employee and what risk there might be in hiring them. The author will also make an effort to finding the reason why international students might be an asset and an opportunity for a Finnish employer.

This study will research what skills and proficiencies an employer might need and is looking for in a university graduate or a student and if their additional requirement to non-Finnish employees. Skills and proficiencies are referred as, attributes, for example, language skills, technological

knowledge, understanding of Finnish culture and other factors are required from an employee, and especially skill seems to be pivotal for a foreign university graduate.

1.5 Background of case companies and organisations

This thesis will study multiple different case companies and organisations. The author will investigate multiple different companies and organisations to get a wide enough perspective, on the mindset of an employer. This thesis focuses on companies and organisations that operate in employee management and recruitment.

Consulting companies, such as Alen consulting, are also included in this study, due to them being a company that actively searches employees for existing companies. Alen consulting is based in Tampere and is doing recruitment for various companies and organisations, therefore having an insight into the job market, and the recruitment practices currently in use. They also have a deeper understanding of the companies that are currently looking for new talents. The author interviewed Minna Kotilainen from Alen consulting for this thesis.

1.6 Research Question

The research question for this thesis is:

“What skills and proficiencies employers are looking for in international graduates”.

The research question, it though from the perspective of the employers, defined as the organisation and profit-driven companies, who are hiring graduates that require a university degree or a degree from a university of applied science.

The point of this research question is to map the current situation in the job market, and what kind of skills and proficiencies are expected from an international graduate. This will require an in-depth view of the current situation in the job market, and seek employers that operate in the recruitment field and conduct an interview on their feeling about the current situation with international graduates applying for jobs in Finland, and how they feel that the situation could be improved.

1.7 Research Objectives

The author of this thesis will investigate the current situation in the job market regarding the employment of foreign international graduates, as well as current recruitment trends that are currently affecting employers. The author will research underlining issues that employers have, that may affect their decisions whether they hire a workforce that is from outside of Finland

As this thesis will be from the employers' perspective, the research will find and introduce solutions that are from the companies' standpoint and how they could benefit from international graduates.

The author will also find what the current trends in the job market regarding the skills and proficiencies that employers are seeking, this will be achieved by comparing job advertisement from a specific period. The author will also observe the future trend affecting the skills and proficiencies that the employers are seeking.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Research methods

The theory the author will use in this thesis is based on the concepts of employee management, and recruitment practises, and the theory behind said practices. Interviews conducted by the author will support the theory. The interviews will include organisations and companies that operate in the human resource field and are responsible for the recruitment of employees, such as consultant companies and government-operated employment services.

This bachelor thesis is partially based on interviews conducted by the author. The author will also research job advertisement within a time frame of three months, to evaluate the current trends in the job market, and get a definitive picture, of what currently is the most sought-after skills, that employees are seeking from possible candidates for their positions.

2.1.1 Literature

The theory will be supported by studies and articles conducted by various organisations, news agencies and other related organisation or groups. The author will use this information to understand better the skills and proficiencies that the employer is expecting a graduate to have. There are several articles written about the qualities, skills and proficiencies, that an employer needs. There is quite a large range of different articles the are about recruitment theory, but the majority of these articles does not touch on underlining reasons, that might severely harm an on applicants' chance compared to another one.

As such, the author has selected articles and other literature, that directly address the social and cultural differences of the applicants, as well as go in detail about the changing attitudes and skill requirement. These articles will mostly include other surveys and other information collected by various news organisation or government agencies.

The information for this thesis is mostly collected from public sources, such as recruitment websites and another website that are focused on employee management, human resources and other websites and literature regarding employee recruitment.

2.1.2 Interviews

The author has conducted a few interviews to support the research conducted for this thesis. These interviews will be conducted to an individual who is either responsible for recruitment practices of an organisation or is involved in the employment area, such as government-operated recruitment services.

The questions in these interviews are based around the expectation of the employer towards the applicants, as well as the situation currently in the job market and future recruitment trends, that might be needed to be addressed.

The people participating in these interviews will be professional or expert that operate in the human resource field and have a detailed and accurate view of the current situation in the job market, and who handle recruitment in a daily basis.

The author did conduct a few interviews for this thesis, but the results of the interviews did not provide necessary information to base conclusions or provide information that could be used for this thesis. The answers that the author received from recruitment professionals were vague overall answers, such as "Read the information in the job advertisement" or "Learn Finnish". Due to the lacklustre information gained from these

interviews, the author decided to focus on existing information that is publicly available, and observation from the job advertisements.

2.2 Qualitative analysis

The author of this thesis will use qualitative methods of analysing data collected through interviews conducted towards professionals who have insight about recruiting employees, and about the trend about skills and proficiencies that employers are seeking. The author will also use information gathered by comparing job notification found on LinkedIn.

2.2.1 Methods used to get data for qualitative analysis

Qualitative analysis is a qualitative research method that is used to analyse data to determine themes from several different interview subjects. Qualitative analysis is a flexible and simple way analysis data. There is step by step system in the usage of thematic analysis. The steps are Familiarisation of data where the author reviews gathered data from interviews, as well as, other methods and familiarises the key points in the data. The next step is to find key sentences and the same repeated concepts and ideas in the interviews. In the next step, there needs to be a connection between the gathered data, where the ideas and concepts are combined. In the last step, the concepts and ideas gather into themes, from where the data can be used to conclude. (Statisticssolutions n.d)

2.3 Skills and proficiencies that are needed in the future

The skills and proficiencies that are expected from an applicant and an employee are various. The digitalisation of the workplace has led to increased expectations regarding the computer and other technical knowledge and also the more traditional skills, like teamwork. (Doyle 2019)

Skills and proficiencies even though they are quite similar, that they describe what kind of talents do an individual have, and what have they gained through their experience and education. But where they differ from one another, is what function they serve in the recruitment process. Skill, meaning a certain talent an individual may have, for example, a degree in programming and proficiencies is the ability to utilise and implement the skill.

2.3.1 The skill needed in the future

The increased emphasis on technology has shifted the focus from the traditional skill set to more technical and technological oriented skill set. The traditional hard and soft skills are being supplemented by skills that revolve around the digital work environment and computer and other information technology. To be able to train a student and existing employees to the workplace of tomorrow, it is important to know what kind of skill are needed to proficiently operate these new technological innovations. (Marr 2019)

Even though traditional hard skills are evolving to meet the requirements of the modern workplace, as well as the future workplace, there are still needed to train employees and students in general education regarding computers, is important that they are a more adaptable change in their working tools. Computers are evolving fast and continuing to strain companies that are trying to keep up with the ever-changing computer systems, so it is important that the employees poses skills such creativity and problem-solving skills and can adapt fast without continues interruption from the employer. (Marr 2019)

Employers are expecting their employees to be able to adapt to the continually changing work environment. Employees in the past did not have to adapt to constant changes in their work environment and would have relatively same work responsibilities and working tools. Continually changing and improving existing computer systems, that are required for almost any modern job, has made skills such as creativity, adaptability and the ability to embracing change, the most sought-after skills. (Marr 2019)

2.4 Hard skills

Hard skills are what a student can study or have tangible evidence that you possess these skills. Hard skills can be obtained by just studying in school, reading books or just by doing a certain activity. These skills are often a result of a study program, like taking classes on how to operate Microsoft Excel and receiving a certificate or a document as proof this skill. This also includes language skills that might be relevant to the position in question. If the applicant is not originally from the country he or she is applying for the position, it may be a requirement to speak the language of the destination country and is a necessary hard skill that an employer requires. (Doyle 2019)

Hard skill identifies a specific need for an applicant that an employer might seek. If a company is seeing a computer programmer, it will seek applications that have completed a degree, training course or another tangible way they have learned that specific hard skill, for example, an internship. The expertise of the applicants that possess the require hard

skill for the position is evaluated in the application process by presenting a certificate of a diploma that lets the recruiting organisation know that this individual possesses the required skills and can then compare that to other applicants and move forward in the application process. (Doyle 2018)

2.4.1 Obtaining hard skills

Hard skills are, for the most part, easy to prove and are essential the main skill that is needed to work in an environment that requires some special skills. Universities and other institution of higher education are the main providers of these skills. Hard skills, for the most part, are presentable and easy to prove and demonstrate and are mostly job-specific. (Doyle 2019)

Obtaining hard skills, is a relatively straight forward way, requiring an individual to follow a certain guideline and to progress their knowledge of the particular hard skill. It is a lot easier to teach someone to build a computer than teaching someone to be a good team player or a good listener. Teaching someone for a specific hard skill like coding is a relatively straightforward process, this the exact opposite when teaching someone about soft skills, that require a lifelong process. (Doyle 2019)

2.5 Soft skills

Soft skills are more personality skills than learned knowledge. Soft skills vary from person to person and can be a wide variety of different soft skills. Soft skills are how people interact with one another or how do they feel towards each other. Unlike hard skills, soft skills are not that easy to obtain through training and study programs. Soft skills, being more or less the opposite of hard skill, and not that easy to measure, are still a crucial part of an employee. (Doyle 2019)

Soft skills are more character traits than skills, but they are still an important part of a healthy workforce. Identifying soft skills are rather difficult, due to them not being so easily tested by exams and such, but they can be demonstrated rather easily in an example, an interview. Soft skills are a crucial part of an employee; as such, they should be mentioned in the initial application. (Glassdoor n.d)

2.5.1 Obtaining soft skills

Obtaining soft skills is not an easy process and requires a long time to develop these skills. Soft skills like being a good communicator and being

good at solving problems require a lifelong experience in these skills, and some people are just born with these skills, not having a soft skill, will require a tedious and long process to obtain them. (Doyle 2019)

2.5.2 Why soft skills are crucial for the employer

Unlike hard skills, which are specific skills needed to be able to effectively perform the assigned tasks, that the employer has hired the employee to do, soft skills are required universally in almost every available field there is. (Doyle 2019)

Soft skills like social skills and excellent communicator are soft skills that the employer needs to run their respective companies effectively. Every job currently requires interaction at least to some limited extent, so soft skills are a requirement for an employee, especially that if a job that requires interaction with the customers. (Doyle 2019)

To be an effective employee, and be independently act, as well perform well in teams, having the necessary soft skills are a requirement for any application, to not only be considered to an open position, but also that they can be an efficient and profitable member for the team, and the employer. (Indeed n.d)

For some applicants demonstrating soft skill may be difficult, due to person who is interviewing the candidate, has no prior knowledge of the applicant, aside what the applicant has mentioned in their resume and application for the open position. Previous jobs and job certificates might help in providing necessary information about the applicant, but without actually working with the candidates, it is hard bringing those crucial for the interviewer to witness. The best way for the candidate to demonstrate that they possess these soft skills is to give examples of the situation how they have behaved in those circumstances. (Indeed n.d)

2.6 Hybrid skills

A modern phenomenon with the rise of digitalisation is hybrid skills. Hybrid skills combine aspects of soft skills and hard skills, as well as more traditional skills, like management with new computer skills. Hybrid skills require both flexibilities in the workplace, and knowledge of multiple different fields, to be able to perform ones' job. (Agarwal 2017)

The rise of hybrid skills is based on the increased digitalisation of the workplace, and the adoption of a new employee and resource management system that require technical knowledge. This change is fairly recent within the last ten years. This has led to the blending of business practices with computer skills. This also led to the side effect of

almost all jobs requiring a basic understanding of computer skills, which lead to straining companies because the older generation has not been trained in basic information technology, which has lead the companies to invest in personnel training, creating more extra expenses for companies. Companies are now seeking employees that already possess, the necessary computer skills. (Agarwal 2017)

Employers are currently adapting to these changes from looking at strictly hark skills, to a blend of soft skills, hard skills and a hybrid of them all. Candidates that possess these hybrid skills are currently being sought after, and as a consequence, their average salaries are significantly higher than those who do not possess the skills. (Agarwal 2017)

2.7 Skills required in the modern workplace

It is important to know what kind skills are more valued by the employers over another one. The modern workplace requires a long list of different skills that are a requirement in almost any position nowadays. It is important to understand what skill is required in the future and start preparing students for them. The most important ones are introduction more focus on the information technology side of the education of the students and teaching them to adapt to new computer programs (Watanabe-Crockett 2018) quickly

The advancement of technology and the digitalisation of the workplace has created pressure on the education institutes to adapt their degree programs to accommodate student for a digital workplace better. To be a productive member of a company, these students must be ready to adapt to constant change. This will create some problems for the educational institutes, on how they can provide the necessary changes (Watanabe-Crockett 2018)

The modern workplace requires more creativity, communication and other soft skills to be able to adapt to modern and future work environments. These include various literacy skills such as digital, social media and information literacies. To be able to successfully market and sell products employers are more reliant on the skills student might bring to the company, and time wasted on training and constantly guiding new employees are as detrimental, and employers hope that, and new graduate can start working immediately after they have been hired. (Watanabe-Crockett 2018)

2.8 Most crucial skills employer seeking from employees

Employers are not only seeking to fill empty positions, with some that will work that same position for their entire career, but they are also searching potential candidates that are future of the company, and have the necessary attribute to advance within the company, and build a successful career as a valuable employee of the company. (GMAC Research Team 2018)

The survey conducted towards employees showed that the employers, are heavily looking for employees that have excellent communication skills, as well as be adaptive towards changing circumstances. Communication skills that are one most sought after soft skills by the employers indicate leadership potential, as the individuals possessing these skills are better suited to understand ideas and convey them to others and presented in a manner that everyone can understand. (GMAC Research Team 2018)

2.9 How employers hire employees

To be able to accurately determine what kind of skills and proficiencies, employers need, there must be a review of how companies recruit their employees, and other recruitment practises they use.

There are a few methods recruiters use, such as passive recruitment, active recruitment and headhunting from other organisations. For a job seeker, it is relevant how recruiters operate, so they can increase their visibility, as well as increase their chances to be noticed.

2.10 What is recruitment

Recruitment of employees is a crucial part of operating a company, and its success is directly linked to the companies financial success. The process involves receiving a potential employee resume and application and determining if their previous work history and application is convincing enough to warrant moving to the next stage of recruitment. (Doyle 2018)

The next stage of the recruitment process involves conducting an interview, with the candidate to determine the suitability for the applied position and determine their qualification. This process usually is the most time-consuming part of the hiring process, but it is required so that the most capable candidate can fill the position in question. (Doyle 2018)

The final stage of the recruitment process is actually to choose the most suitable candidate for the position. Employers might do background checks on the candidates, that what information they have provided for the employers is legitimate, and that they have the proper educational

background. The main purpose of a company is to make a profit, and minimise risk in doing so, that the candidates that match the job description the best, including their educational background and previous work experience, carry most important for the employer, regarding a candidates' application. Some other factors, like how the candidate performed in the interview, and how they would be a valuable asset for the company. (Doyle 2018)

2.10.1 Who is responsible for the recruitment of employees?

Responsibility for the recruitment of new employees is the responsibility to the human resource department, and therefore are one of the most crucial parts of the organisation they represent. The human resource department, in any given organisation, always under pressure, regarding the hiring of new employees, and they have to accurately screen the potential candidates so that they can find the most qualified candidate for the position. Though recruitment, the company can balance the workload of the company, and maximise the efficiency of the company operations, and this is one of the reasons companies have an expectation, from the candidates, so that they can be integrated faster to the companies' structure and create profit for the company. Hiring staff that do not have a crucial skill such as language proficiency can consume the time of other employees, thus distracting them from the other operations of the company. (Doyle 2018)

2.11 How employers look for employees

Before the recruitment process can start the organisation or the company seeking candidates for their open positions, need to define the characteristics, skills, proficiencies and other relevant information about the position, before they can start finding the most suitable candidates for the position.

There are numerous, different ways that a company or an organisation might find candidates for the position they are trying to fill:

The most effective way to find suitable candidates for the organisation, is, from the existing networks, and spreading the information through the existing employees. The existing employees may now people that are qualified for the position, and thus be able to recommend possible candidates. The other way to seek new candidates, for any position, is to actively search possible candidates in other companies, referred to as headhunting, and offer them a position within the company looking for new employees.

2.12 Passive recruitment

Passive recruitment is, perhaps the most widely used recruitment method. Majority of the time recruiters post and open position notification, in their website or some job board website. The posting will stay up for a significant amount of time, and during that time a job posting may receive thousands of applications and generally, there is a high volume of applications, and the employer can pick and choose the candidates that they wish to move forward with. (Doyle 2018)

Passive recruitment is by far the most used way of seeking employees to fill positions in a company, but it comes with the cost, as the sheer volume of applications might overwhelm the individuals responsible for the recruitment process. This might also lead to other problems, such as the required and sought of demographic of job seekers might not be reached and the skills and proficient that the employers are seeking, could not be filled by the applicants for the position. (Doyle 2018)

2.13 Active recruitment

The main difference between active recruitment and passive recruitment is how the recruiter seeks out the candidates for the position. Inactive recruitment, the recruiter is looking for a candidate with required predetermined skills and proficiencies. This also includes when the specifics of the position that the company or the organisation are trying to fill, is well defined and require a certain skill or a talent, for example, an accountants' position requires a well-defined set of skills. (Motley 2016)

The recruiter has many different ways to reach these candidates. They may search for the candidate that already has a job, but in a different organisation and will make contact, and offered them a new position in the recruiters' organisation. The recruiter may also go into university campuses to find a student of the corresponding degree program. Active recruitment has been made a lot more popular through the increasing usage of social media networks, and through services such as LinkedIn, the recruiters have access to detailed information about a possible candidate, and their work history. (Motley 2016)

2.14 The importance of the Finnish language for international graduates

During the interview with Minna Kotilainen, that the author conducted for this thesis, the Finnish language, is, unfortunately, the most crucial part of getting a job in Finland. Most companies require high levels of coordination, to be able to effectively to accomplish the goals and day-to-day operation of the company. Most of the customer of these companies

are mainly other Finnish companies or Finnish speaking consumers, so it is simply a necessary part of an employee to speak the native tongue is of the country they are seeking employment. (Kotilainen 2019)

2.14.1 Increasing the language skills of foreign graduates

Minna Kotilainen mentioned during the interview that the universities that have international degree programs, lack Finnish language training, and the universities of applied sciences, need to drastically increase the language training of the international students that do not have previous Finnish language proficiency. It is simply one of the most important factors facing international graduates, when they are looking for employment, as such the Universities and Universities of Applied Sciences, operating in Finland, that have degree programs in English, and attracting foreign student, must provide more Finnish education to the student to increase the chances of them successfully finding employment after graduation. (Kotilainen 2019)

Ms Kotilainen also presents some ideas to improve the language skill of international graduates. These include language learning from outside of the school, that the universities could support, such as increasing the affordability and the availability of the courses. There is currently multiple city-operated and other private institution that provides extensive Finnish language courses, but currently, the co-operation between the universities and the institutions is rather limited, and therefore the benefit that they could provide is not fully utilised and could be subject of further co-operation. Some projects involving these institutions could be arranged, and they could introduce their study programs and advertise their courses to the student. (Kotilainen 2019)

2.14.2 Increasing to co-operation between the companies and Universities

During the interview, Minna Kotilainen encouraged increasing the co-operation between the companies and the Universities so that the companies are more exposed to the benefits of foreign graduates and in the future would be keener on employing these international students to their companies and provide internships for them. This would lead to a more beneficial relationship between the Universities and the employers. At the same time, the companies might introduce their opinions on the study programs and what kind of skills and proficiencies they might need in the future and the would-be more prepared to take on international graduates to work in their companies. (Kotilainen 2019)

3 JOB ADVERTISEMENT COMPARISON

The author of this thesis has evaluated the current situation in the job market by comparing job advertisements in LinkedIn. The point and the purpose of comparing job advertisements in LinkedIn are to find the relevant skills and proficiencies that companies are seeking from foreign graduates in Finland. The job advertisements compared on the thesis, are mainly starter jobs and internships, that might be the main position that these foreign graduates might apply to.

3.1 Criteria for what job advertisements were selected for this study

Most of the job posting selected for this comparison was made in English and required the applicant to submit their resume in English and their cover in English as well. This job posting was situated all over Finland, but most job advertisements in English were situated in the Helsinki metropolitan area. The author of this thesis selected the most job advertisements for this comparison, such as an opening in companies that operate in fields that could affect engineering student or business administration students. The author selected the job advertisements from companies and organisations that are internationally oriented, as there are heavily involved in operation outside of Finland, such as large-scale export of industrial machinery, or marketing position for international marketing companies.

3.1.1 Field of study selected for this comparison

The fields selected for this study, are mainly from the fields that have significant international participation such as engineering and international business. The positions have titles such as marketing intern, sales assistants and other junior position within any given company or organisation. The reason why only junior positions are considered for this comparison is that these positions most likely do not require any previous experience from the applicant.

3.2 The platform where the job advertisements were picked

Why LinkedIn was chosen for this comparison is because, it has to widely available job notification system in the world, and is the place where the most information can be collected that are most relevant to this study, This mainly includes positions from companies and organisation that operate in fields that might have a need for international graduates, such as shipping companies and other companies that operate globally, and generally have several offices outside of Finland, and does not necessarily need Finnish speaking employees.

This comparison of job advertisements was carried out between June and August of 2019, and the author manages to compile a list of relevant skills that employers are looking for in modern-day international graduates. The author focused on a skill that could be trained in all of the numerous degree programs that have significant numbers of international students. These skills include, for example, computer and other information technology skills, language skills and some soft skills like good teamworking skills, spontaneous and quick learner.

3.3 Criteria that are required from the candidates

The following list shows the collection of different criteria that employers have set for their possible future candidates:

- The candidates should have a degree in the relevant field of studies, such as engineering or business administration, or about to finish their studies. The candidates should also have a proven record of their academic performance, and that they have participated in studies that are somewhat relevant to the position that is applying to. For example, position looking for candidates in accounting companies and position, would require some level of accounting experience during their studies, and have good grades to prove that they have performed well in their accounting studies. These course requirements also extend to the human resources field, where the applicant is required to have completed human resource studies in their university, and also have a proven academic record, of successful studies
- The candidates are expected to have an advanced level of computer and other information technology proficiencies, and able to fluently use computer systems, as well as commonly found office tools, such as Microsoft Office products like Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Word and Microsoft PowerPoint. Most of the position that was posted, in LinkedIn, required some level of proficiency in computer systems, even though the jobs themselves did not seem to be heavily focused on computer usage. Even position that traditionally did not require computer or information technology skills is now required to have at least some level of computer expertise. Even position, like warehouse worker, is required to have some proficiency in using enterprise resource planning systems, even though it is not necessarily requiring, it seems like a preferred skill.
- Most of this positions that were available in LinkedIn that was searching for candidates in positions were looking for candidates for starting position, entry-level position and internship position would

mention that experience would be preferred, even though they were searching for new graduates.

- The candidates are expected to have some sophisticated soft skills like teamworking or spontaneous attitudes, for them to be able to be considered for the position. These two soft skills were present in almost all of the job advertisements, but these notices did not go in-depth, why these skills are so crucial for the positions. Other soft skills that these job advertisements mentioned include fast learner, motivated and positive character. These starting positions seem to require more on soft skills than hard skill, and the more advanced level of job advertisements that are searching for candidates in senior levels of the company or organisation seems to rely more on previous experience, and the abilities and skills learned in those previous positions,
- The most sought-after skill from what the author could interpret from the information from the job advertisements is the language skills of these candidates. Almost universally, these positions required a professional understanding of Finnish, both written and spoken. Some of these job openings promote an international environment for their possible candidates and generally operate in a field that requires interaction with companies or organising that based outside of Finland. These companies are large exporters and must be interacting with non-Finnish speaking contacts.

3.4 Results of the comparison

The comparison of these job advertisements has revealed an almost standardisation of job advertisements. They are searching for some candidates for their positions, with the requirement of the degree program changing from position to positions, but the soft skills that are required from the applicants are uniformly true. This also includes the language skills of the applicants' Finnish language is still required for most candidates to be accepted or considered for these positions.

These job advertisements gave the author a baseline, of the skills and proficiencies that employers, are currently looking for in possible candidates. The Finnish job market is currently having a requirement of professional understanding in Finnish and be able to use it fluently in both writing and spoken. The importance of soft skills was highlighted in these numerous job advertisements and are increasingly more important, as the modern job market requires high levels of adaptability.

3.5 Job advertisement comparison in other Nordic countries

The author extended the comparison to other countries as well to get an accurate idea of how other countries search for their employees. The comparison was taken in the same period, from June to August 2019, and include various countries in Europe, but mainly in the Nordic countries of Sweden, Denmark and Norway. These countries have some job advertisements, as Finland does, and they also require some proficiency in the native language of those countries. The main difference between the other Nordic countries and Finland is that the higher percentage of the job advertisements, are in English and the language requirements for the native language, are listed as preferred but necessary.

According to the job advertisements, other Nordic countries are more international oriented than Finland and have adopted a more flexible model when recruiting employees. Their companies are more likely to hire employees from international backgrounds, and generally have more positive attitudes towards international graduates, and most likely would be open to hiring international graduates, that study in their home countries. Then language requirements being lower in these other Nordic countries might indicate, a higher portion of the local companies to be involved in international trade and are more export-oriented than their Finnish counterpart, that seems to prefer operating within Finland

4 THE STATE OF FOREIGN GRADUATES IN FINLAND

This chapter, the author has mapped out reasons why some employers are not hiring international graduates for their position, and the general employment situation in Finland, and also the author will present problem found in the Finnish labour market.

Based on the research the author has conducted, there are several reasons why foreign graduates have difficulties getting jobs or having employment opportunities at all. The state of foreign graduate employment opportunities and the possible reasons why employers are not hiring foreign universities.

4.1 Risk in hiring non-native language speakers

Employers and organisations are always under pressure to guarantee that they function in the most efficient way possible, reducing unnecessary expenses and maximising profits. This mentality also extends to the recruitment of new employees for the positions that any given employer

is seeking to fill. So, any risks that may increase expenses for the employer will avoid if possible.

The authors' research has pointed out that the single most crucial skill that the foreign graduates are lacking has professional working proficiency in Finnish. Professional proficiency requires that an individual can communicate in Finnish fluently, and have a vocabulary that is required by the individuals to perform their jobs efficiently as possible. The lack of sufficient Finnish language skills may also lead to some degree of social isolation but also greatly decrease the employment opportunities of the foreign graduate, the employer will always seek employees that require the least amount training to be able to function independently without much supervision.

4.1.1 Risks for employer

Hiring a non-Finnish speaking employee brings several risk and problems for the employer. For one, the main customer base of these employers is Finnish, and for the most part have a customer that are native Finnish speakers, that may also want to use their services, are expecting for the employees to speak Finnish. Even when placing employees. That do not speak Finnish always from the position that does not require to interact with customers directly, presents a problem when communicating with employees, that do speak Finnish. For example, an order might be done in Finnish, and there is a need to translate the order for English speaking employees. This may lead to communication difficulties between employees, creating stress and interrupting for the flow of orders.

Employers are increasingly outsourcing the training of employees to the Universities and the Universities of Applied Sciences, so that when they hire an employee, they have the necessary skills to be able to perform their designed job, without requiring to conduct additional training. A most economically efficient way of hiring employees is to hire them already trained, and possibly with prior work experience. The most glaring skill and proficiency that employers are requiring from the candidates they are seeking for any given position is as mentioned previously, the professional working proficiency in Finnish is the main factor in the lack of employment opportunities in Finland.

4.2 Lack of connections and lack of working experience in Finland

The most prominent and perhaps the easiest way to get a job or receive employment opportunities in Finland is having some connection to an already established workplace. Knowing a person in a company that can speak for a possible candidate and create a positive image of an applicant,

will undoubtedly influence the selection process for the positions in favour of the candidate that has a connection in the company.

4.2.1 Importance of having connections in the job-seeking

Even Finnish graduates have problems seeking employment in Finland. Most job seekers manage to get employment from an acquaintance, relatives or other connection to an employer, so they already have a way to get a job. Only 23 percent of employed professionals in Finland received their jobs from applying to an open position, meaning that majority of the working population of Finland, have received their current place of employment from a previously established connection, like a former colleague or from a relative who owns the place of employment or is working there and can influence the selection process of new employees. (Raeste 2016)

This might lead to unfavourable consequences for the persons applying for open positions that are applying without having a connection working in the company. The individuals might even be more qualified for the positions that are being filled by candidates, that can influence the selection process that already has somebody they know working in the company. For example the person might have to take a job they are overqualified for or do not want to work in, and that might lead to a cycle where the person without the connection cannot make any new one, and therefore cannot receive any employment in companies that have positions matching their degree or other skills and proficiencies. (Raeste 2016)

4.2.2 The impact of lack of connection in international graduates

Finnish job seekers face problems when seeking employment, when they do not have connections in the company or working life in general, is in a major disadvantage compared to those that do have. Even qualified job seekers are being ignored in favour of non-qualified once if the non-qualified job seeker knows someone working in the company.

These lacks of connections can be devastating for immigrants and international students, as they are trying to seek employment in a country that heavily relies on a connection to get a job. International students are mainly employed by getting unpaid internships in companies and getting employed fulltime paid position afterwards the to the said company. As the main route for employment for international graduates is unpaid internships during their studies, applying for open positions are almost impossible to obtain, and will eventually leading to a loss of intellectual

capital, when these international graduates, they move to country where connection is not the most prevalent way to get employment, and their skills are more appreciated. (Raeste 2016)

The Finnish innovation fund, Sitra conducted a survey to employed persons in various fields in the Finnish job market, to evaluate how these workers have received their current position within their respective companies and organisations. This survey included the methods how the employees had applied for the jobs, as have the employees gotten their position through an open application, where they offered that position when they were not actively looking for a new job or did they use their connections to get that position. The survey showed that 23 per cent of employees had gotten their position by applying to an open application and the rest 77 per cent of applicants have used some connection to get their position at the company or organisation. These connections mainly are previous acquaintances of the applicants, such as friends or relatives working on a senior management role in recruiter position or in a position in which they can influence the selection process. (Sitra 2016)

This current situation where the connection is vastly more valued, has presented a painful situation to these job seekers that come from outside of Finland and are seeking employment. The problem with the lack of connection is apparent in Finnish speaking natives as well and is only magnified when coming from outside of Finland.

5 ANALYSIS

5.1 Problems facing international graduates

The current job situation in Finland, is complex, with many small nuances that require vast amounts of inside information, and a lot of knowledge on how to navigate the job market, to find a suitable position to apply to. The Jobs currently posted in various channels, from which employers are looking for employees, are filled with different job advertisements on almost every field, that an international student or an international graduate might apply to. These positions seemed to be unfilled from one application period to the next.

The research conducted for this thesis by the author, as well as several news sources, has provided valuable insight in the Finnish job market and how the recruitment professionals find candidates, evaluate the candidates for that specific positions. They have strict criteria what the candidates should be, including their personality traits, previous job experience and educational background, with proven academic

performance. The actual interviews seem to have little to do, with the hiring decision, with the emphasis being but on existing skills that the candidate might already possess. These recruitment specialists seem to rather the position that they are looking for a candidate empty than filled with an employee that might not be the perfect candidate.

The research has presented a dilemma within the job market where employers that might require an employee with an international background and might be already seeking one to fill a position within their company, but they are reluctant to hire a candidate with an international background.

5.1.1 Fears of the employer

The fears and risk that that employer might have regarding international candidates might include factors such as loss of productivity, because of the employees' background and unfamiliarity with Finnish work culture or work methods, and other difficulties are integrating a person unfamiliar in working in Finland. Even though the possible candidate has a degree in a relevant field for the position, the employer might not be familiar with education methods of the university, and this uncertainty might lead them to conclude that an international graduate in unnecessary risk.

The continued emphasis on the knowledge of the Finnish language is the main reason that the employer might not be willing to hire candidates from foreign backgrounds and might be avoiding foreign employees due to fears in losing productivity, due to cultural differences or communication difficulties. Companies aim to maximise their profits as much as possible, and employee pay one of the biggest expense companies, might occur, so these companies must try to maximise the profitability of individual employees.

Even if the fears of the employees might be unfounded, the culture of uncertainty and the lack of information regarding these degree programs, create uncertainty that employer is always trying to minimise, and avoiding risk is driving factor in the acquisition of employees.

5.2 Potential in international graduates for employers

How the Finnish market structure exists currently does not have a lot of international elements within them, so hiring employees with international backgrounds, from outside of Finland present an unnecessary, risk from the employers' point of view. The mindset of small to medium-sized companies, do not have a significant presence in the international market and may lack even English skill to do so.

5.2.1 Potential from globalism

These companies that have not embraced the global market have enormous potential to grow, and seek customers outside of Finland, and find business partners outside their immediate vicinity. The companies have a lot of potentials to spread their business models, products to other services to outside of Finland, and that would require hiring employees that have completed studies in international business, would most likely not require professional proficiency in the Finnish language. The companies currently operating only in Finland that could have potential customers and business partners outside of Finland are left without the knowledge or the education to start any international endeavours.

Today's world is facing increased global co-operation between business, and the internet has made it possible. The introduction web-based stores have enabled the average consumer to make purchases, outside their country of residence, and that has opened new for the companies to reach the new customer in every region of the world. Internationalisation has an effect even the smallest company, but Finland seems to be behind in this field, and international students, may hold the answer to increased export of Finnish products and services.

5.2.2 Effects of international students in the local economy

The effect on the economy from these international students could be significant. These students who live in their host country and therefore use goods and services and generate income to local business and accumulate taxes for the government. After the student graduates, they can be productive members of society, generating income and generating value for their place on employment, as well as, the government, from their income taxes, and increased financial stability, they invest their income back to the economy. Just living in their host could potentially have a great financial impact on the local economy. If these students find a corresponding position with their degree, the financial impact can be so beneficial to the host country, that they should continue to attract international students more actively.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

The state of the Finnish market has yet to internationalise, as well its neighbours have, but there are significant opportunities for international graduates to create more value for Finnish companies, and expand their

customer base to overseas, and get a foothold in the international markets. There is a significant potential for companies to expand to foreign markets, and international student might be the catalyst for this massive expansion of the Finnish market.

Finland is a land of innovation but lack the skills and experience to expand to other countries, and create international co-operations, with other countries and businesses. There are several Finnish companies who actively higher international graduates for a position in their companies, and generally have had great results with these former students. An international student who graduates from Finnish universities has skills and proficiencies that employers, most certainly need to expand their businesses, but might have a lack of ambition that is needed to grow company overseas.

Lack of utilisation of these highly skilled international students, will inevitably lead to a brain drain and these individuals, will get to countries that are more open to hiring international students, and Finnish education systems have trained an employee that is highly skilled for another country to benefit. The problem of the brain drain is already affecting Finnish speaking university graduates, and this problem only magnified in international graduates, and those who do not speak Finnish with professional working proficiency.

One-third of graduates are working in some field that does not necessarily correspond with their degree, the numbers are reflecting a wider problem in the Finnish market, regarding employers and job seekers. Companies now days are willing to leave job openings unfilled that fill them with candidates, that they deem not qualified to fill the position. The attitude that Finnish employers have to seem one of finding something arbitrary as the best possible candidate that has no flaws.

Lack of existing connection is most likely the second biggest concern affecting international graduates, after language skill requirements. Even native citizen of Finland with full proficiency in the Finnish language, both written and spoken are finding it difficult to find a place of employment without references or any connection within the company. Less than one-fourth of position is filled by applying directly to a company, rather concerning the number and intimidating demoralising for the average job seeker. And again, this problem of lack of connection is only magnified with foreign workers seeking employment.

6.1 Potential of international graduates

Even though Finnish employers currently are sceptical about hiring non-Finnish speaking foreign graduates for their respective companies, there is enormous growth potential for the companies, who are already

experimenting and doing initial planning to enter foreign markets. The current job market in Finland does not have benefits to companies to hire international graduates.

In other Nordic countries, internationalisation has already been embraced, and an international student is seen as a way for companies to expand their business further abroad and radiate their international presence. Finland has not yet, fully integrated foreign graduates to its working culture, but as we move towards a more globalised world, the importance of employees of foreign backgrounds will only increase, as the internet enables spreading products and services across the globe and opening new markets for the small and medium-sized companies.

There are a few ways where employers would be more open to hiring employees from foreign backgrounds and graduates from international degree programs. The main emphasis of this thesis is to find ways to incentives companies hire international graduates, by examining what skills and proficiencies the employers are looking for, and how to train these international graduates with these skills and proficiencies.

6.2 Increasing the study and importance of the Finnish language

During the research for this thesis, it was not a surprise that the lack of language skills is the main driver factor any change for employment among Finnish companies, especially, those that are small to medium-sized companies and have less than 50 employees, and international expansion is an endeavour, that poses a risk and greatest uncertainty, and thus hiring workers who specialise in international affairs is not relevant to these companies.

To combat any drawback in hiring international talent, it imperative that Finnish language skills of international graduates, are improved and professional working proficiency in the Finnish language, has to be improved, not only does having a professional working proficiency in Finnish help the international graduates find employment, in the companies, that are currently not inclined to expand international but mainly operate inside of Finland, but living and handling personal affairs such as taxes and bills are more convenient to handle and understand.

The main responsibility to increase the language skills, is the universities and the universities of applied sciences, from where to obtain their degrees and study in. The degrees and the proficient and skills needed to obtain them is, of course, the main focus of these degree programs, but the language training in these universities lacks to a troubling degree. These degree programs provide only a few courses in Finnish, and as such are not providing sufficient Finnish language proficiency and does not

provide a meaningful basis for the working life, where language proficiency is required.

Currently, students have to go outside of their universities and locations of study, to arrange studies for themselves. Student essentially has gone to private institutions to provide them with comprehensive language training.

6.2.1 Steps to take to improve language training

As the degree programs and the universities that provide them are main facilities, where language teaching can be done in a wide enough scale to be effective the following changes could be necessary to increase the language proficiencies of international graduates:

- Drastically increase the number of Finnish language courses, so that they can provide comprehensive language training, that will provide a basis for future language training, that further increases the proficiencies in the Finnish language.
- Courses should provide enough training, so that the students can grasp the basic concepts of the Finnish language, as in they understand and can speak and write in Finnish so that advanced vocabulary can be achieved with less effort than starting directly at a professional working vocabulary.
- Increase projects that are done in the Finnish language, and perhaps try to involve local business to this process. This will enable companies to express their current and plans, that might include international students, and what they could stand to benefit from the participation of international graduates to their businesses

With these improvements to the curriculum in universities, the language proficiency of international students should have an at least a basic understanding of the Finnish language and can learn vocabulary more easily, as well as improve their speaking skills, when they are involved in projects with Finnish speaking businesses and organisations. Even with some elementary understanding of the Finnish language, companies and organisation should be more open to hiring international graduates, when they know that graduates have at least the basic understanding of Finnish.

6.3 Improve cooperation between companies and universities

Other major point that is severely lacking in the employment side in the curriculum, is the lack of cooperation between the companies and the universities, as well as the lack of connection for international graduates but also Finnish speaking students, that are not able to advance to working life after they graduate, because of the lack of connection and resulting lack of experience in their field of study.

In Finland, only 23 per cent of employees have received their current position by applying directly to an open position, and not having any previous experience in that specific company. This means that Finnish companies prefer candidates that have someone they know in the company. Companies aim to minimise risks, so hiring candidates that they have someone they can vouch for, rather hire a person that they know nothing about except their application and resume.

There are several ways to improve this situation, as stated by the interviews and research collected for this thesis. Students need to be exposed to these companies, and also the companies must familiarise with these degree programs.

As in language learning, universities play the most crucial role in improving the exposure of companies to students and students to companies:

- Universities should hold more events where potential employers can come to the university or another event area to discuss with students and teacher about the degree program. And that the companies have a better understanding of the contents of the degree program, and what benefits they might receive when they hire international graduates.
- Host more project that involves local companies, so that students have experience in working in these fields, corresponding with their degree programs. This will also create a valuable connection that these students may use them to find a suitability job opening and have a better chance to be employed.
- Universities should also actively promote unpaid internship and try to find suitable places of employment for their students, and try to increase the dialogue and cooperation between the employers and the universities, so that the employment opportunities of the students are more numerous, and helps the international graduates to work in Finland and stay in Finland.

7 CONCLUSION

This thesis, as part of the Go Strong project, researched different aspects of the hiring process within a company, and what kind of skills and proficiencies. This thesis used concepts such as soft skills, hard skills and hybrid skills to categorise the types of skills employers are expecting from international graduates. The study for this thesis contains numerous ways from which employers select their employees, insight from experts that are responsible for the recruitment of new employees and the hiring process as a whole.

The study for this thesis was based on interviews conducted by the author, as well as existing research about employment trends and different social and economic factors that might influence a hiring decision. Improving the employability of foreign graduates, would be a resource-intensive undertaking for the universities, but the results could vastly improve the chance of employment among international graduates, that would benefit everyone involved.

The research for this thesis has concluded that two main factors that are influencing the hiring decision of employers when considering international graduates for an open position. Improving language skills, of international graduates, would be most efficiently done in the universities, from which they receive their degrees from and conducting a project, where that skill can be obtained, is crucial if the employment chances of the international graduates can improve. As well as introducing companies to the benefits of hiring international graduates, and valuable connection to the business world. As surveys and research have suggested, practical solutions are the most successful way to improve skills, so creating practical projects is the most efficient way to improve language skills, and as an added benefit, obtain valuable contacts and references.

The result of this thesis was that, even though international graduates were motivated to work, there were not sufficient employment opportunities in Finland, that would sufficiently utilise their skill set and talents. This leads to international graduates to emigrate from Finland to their home countries and other countries that had employment opportunities.

The results for this revealed that even though employers are increasingly open to international graduates, the language requirements were the main factor when deciding to hire a candidate. Increasing language skills of international graduates will drastically increase their employment opportunities. Overall, the research for this thesis showed that the increasing internationalisation will open new opportunities for international graduates, and employers are likely to lower their language requirements.

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